

Long-term Goals

How Montana established long-term goals and measurements of interim progress for academic achievement

Student learning is at the heart of the work of all public educators. Montana's educators are committed to continuous progress in students' academic achievement, graduation and well-being. They are constantly evaluating, responding and adjusting to student learning at the classroom level. Local school districts should take the lead on setting goals for their community schools. Measurement of quality at the state level must be rigorous, yet flexible. Maintaining high expectations for all students is non-negotiable, and statewide goals should be reasonable and use data to inform areas that need concentration, focus and attention. Given that, our new online state assessment has its first baseline year, growth of academic performance must be established from that point. Stakeholders expressed a desire to establish aspirational goals that are reasonable and data based. Since Montana only has one year of SBAC data, it is a challenge to determine exactly what goals to set. Stakeholders believe that the following should guide our goal setting:

1. Goals should be set based on current performance of a student group or subgroup. Therefore, goals should be developed which build on a school's current performance (rather than setting a fixed number goal). These improvement indicators should cover a time period of three years as long term goals.
2. Goals should aspire toward a statewide goal which would be the state average of all schools and by subgroup once there is more than one year of performance data.
3. Goals should accommodate the varying performance capabilities of low performing and high performing schools.
4. Goals should be separately set for each subgroup and for the all student subgroup.
5. Goals should be set with as much emphasis as allowable for improvements in the school climate indicator specifically a school improvement rubric.
6. Goals could be set for separately for grade bands K through 8 and for high school.

A primary focus is to narrow the achievement gaps between subgroups and to set realistic expectations for all students at each grade span. The OPI proposes to develop long term goals for the first four indicators in the process outlined below. The OPI will develop a statewide average (SWA) for each indicator and compare school performance against the SWA for all students and each subgroup of students. Interim progress will be examined yearly and long term progress will examine outcomes at the end of three years compared to the starting SWA.

1. Academic Achievement – For schools below the SWA in ELA or math, the goal is an increase toward the SWA. For schools at or above the SWA in ELA or math, the goal is to maintain or improve performance. The same goals would be applied to each subgroup of ten or more students.
2. Academic Progress – The OPI will develop an SWA for improvement over the most recent two years of data for ELA and math. For schools below the SWA in ELA or math, the goal is an increase toward the SWA. For schools at or above the SWA in ELA or math, the goal is to maintain or improve performance. The same goals would be applied to each subgroup of ten or more students.
3. Graduation Rates – The OPI will develop a SWA for the four-year cohort graduation rate. For schools below the SWA, the goal is an increase toward the SWA. For schools at or above the SWA, the goal is to maintain or improve performance. The same goals would be applied to each subgroup of ten or more students.
4. School Quality/Success – The OPI will develop a rubric for evaluating school improvement plans, which will include a survey on school climate factors.

5. EL Proficiency Progress – Long term and interim goals for this indicator are described below.

How Montana established our long term goals and measurements of interim progress for EL proficiency

An advisory group, consisting of stakeholders from across the state met several times about English language proficiency and goals for students entering and exiting based on the WIDA. The advisory group determined the following Growth Criterion-

Starting target is 45% of all ELs will grow in English language proficiency by 0.5 on the composite score (2018)

2019 increase of 2.5%.

2020 increase of 2%

2021 increase 1.5%

Ending target is 51% in 2021.

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